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Capabilities and Deployment of the Soviet Tallinn System

The Tallin defensive missile system now being deployed in the USSR is directed against the airborne threat, particularly high performance aircraft and standoff weapons. It probably can engage medium and high altitude aircraft and air-to-surface missiles at speeds up to about mach 3 and at altitudes up to about 100,000 feet. Its maximum range is probably about 75 miles but varies with target speed and altitude. The system could employ either a conventional warhead with homing guidance or a nuclear warhead with or without homing guidance. The Tallin system probably has capabilities against strategic missiles only in the limited self-defense role inherent in a high performance surface-to-air missile system.

The Defense Intelligence Agency dissents in part from this assessment. DIA believes that it conveys much higher confidence than the available evidence supports and does not adequately acknowledge the possibility of an ABM role. If equipped with an ABM warhead and certain electronic equipment the Tallinn system could have both a local and self-defense capability. With data from long range ABM radars and central command and control some sites would have a limited ABM area defense capability.

USAF Intelligence also dissents from the assessment, and believes that the Tallinn system probably was designed for and now possesses an area ABM capability even without inputs from long range radars.

The first Tallinn site probably became operational during 1967 and there are now more than 40 complexes being deployed in barrier defenses across likely avenues of attack and in point defense of key targets. By about 1972 deployment could reach 100 to 125 operational complexes and deployment may be extended to another 50 or so complexes by 1975. Commensurate reductions in other surface-to-air missile systems will probably occur.

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Soviet Bomber Threat to the United States

Although the ballistic missile has clearly replaced the manned bomber as the principal means of attack against the United States, the bomber forces of Soviet Long Range Aviation still represent a substantial capability for strategic strike and reconnaissance. LRA now comprises a force of about 200 bombers and tankers and about 750 medium bombers and tankers.

We believe that Soviet planning calls for the use of the LRA in attacks following an initial missile strike or to supplement the retaliatory blow if the USSR is attacked first. Against the United States, such attacks would probably be carried out almost exclusively by heavy bombers and almost all the heavy bombers force would be employed. We doubt that the medium bombers--either with refueling or on one-way missions--figure prominently in Soviet plans for an initial attack on the United States.

The heavy bomber force will probably remain close to the present level for the next few years. It is unlikely that the Soviets will introduce a follow-on heavy bomber, and attrition and retirement will gradually reduce the present force. We expect it to be completely phased out over the next 10 years or so.

At present, the heavy bomber force consists of 90 Bisons and 110 Bears. The Bison is a turbojet heavy bomber which first entered service in 1956. It can carry almost 15 tons of bombs to a radius of about 4,000 miles--with one refueling--at speeds over 500 knots. The turboprop Bear also entered service in 1956 and can also carry up to 15 tons of bombs. It has a radius of over 4,000 miles at speeds up to 500 knots. Later versions can carry one AS-3 Kangaroo air-to-surface missile instead of bombs. The AS-3 is a mach 2 cruise missile with a range of 350 miles.

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Significance of Soviet Development of a Fractional
Orbit Bombardment System (FOBS)

For over two years the Soviets have been flight testing hardware for a Fractional Orbit Bombardment System (FOBS). They have conducted 16 tests, of which 11--including the last eight--have probably been successful. A FOBS could be ready for operational deployment within the next year or so and the chances are better than even that it will be deployed, probably in relatively small numbers, within the next few years.

With the present state of the art, a FOBS would be more complex and less accurate than an ICBM and would deliver a smaller payload than an ICBM using the same booster. Nevertheless, the degree of effort going into this program indicates that the Soviets see certain advantages in such a system. A FOBS would probably be intended to minimize or eliminate US early warning time and to attack soft, time urgent targets such as SAC alert bases. The Soviets may also consider that the FOBS would complicate US ABM defenses.

The developmental FOBS now being tested--the SS-X-6--

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If the Soviets reduce payload weight, they could begin deployment of the system soon. If they choose to improve the present launch vehicle, the FOBS would not be ready for deployment until late this year or early next. An entirely new launch system would probably not be ready for deployment before 1969.

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A FOBS based on the SS-X-6 system now being tested could carry

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The capabilities of the system deployed would depend on which alternative the Soviets choose to improve the present system. The FOBS would probably be deployed in hardened silos and have a reaction time of 3-5 minutes for an unlimited period.

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